

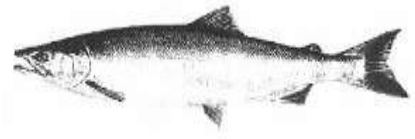
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Lower Cook Inlet Salmon Fishery News Release #33

The Outer, Eastern, Southern and Kamishak Bay districts will close to purse seine harvest for the 2012 season at 12:01 AM on Sunday, September 16. The set gillnet fishery in the Southern District remains open through September 30 as per 5AAC 21.310. There have been no commercial deliveries reported since August 22 for either gear type. Subsistence harvest in the Port Chatham and Windy Bay subdistricts closed on August 1, however subsistence harvest remains open through September 30 in the Port Graham and Dogfish Bay (Koyuktoalik) subdistricts as per 5AAC 01.560.

The preliminary estimate of the 2012 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest as based on current fish ticket data is 497,556 salmon. The harvest was composed of 234,383 pink, 208,070 sockeye, 54,813 chum, 157 coho, and 133 Chinook salmon. The harvest was comprised of 352,196^a (71%) commercial common property fishery (CPF) fish, and 145,360^a (29%) hatchery cost recovery and broodstock fish.

Southern District

The 2012 preseason commercial harvest forecast for natural production in the Southern District was 1,900 sockeye and 6,200 pink salmon. Hatchery releases from previous years at Leisure Lake, Hazel Lake, Tutka Bay, Port Graham and English Bay were anticipated to contribute 8,500 sockeye salmon to the 2012 commercial harvest. The commercial salmon fishing season in the Southern District began on Friday, June 1. Purse seine harvest for the 2012 season was 6,366 sockeye and 155,538 pink salmon. This compares to a previous 10-year harvest average of 78,561 for sockeye and 10,702 for pink salmon. The set gillnet harvest was 10,260 sockeye and 10,305 pink salmon. The previous 10-year harvest average for this gear type is 30,597 sockeye and 3,730 pink salmon. Preliminary estimates show that pink salmon escapement in index streams was near the midpoint of the cumulative sustainable escapement goal (SEG) range of 59,700–178,500 fish. The weir at the English Bay River passed 3,861 sockeye salmon. This was below the SEG of 6,000–13,500 for this system.

Outer District

The 2012 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 16,700 sockeye and 256,000 pink salmon. The commercial salmon fishing season began in this district on Thursday, July 26. Overall harvest was 78 sockeye, 59,567 pink and 50,906 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year averages of 14,558 sockeye, 422,428 pink and 24,149 chum salmon. Preliminary escapement survey indices for chum salmon were near the midpoint of the SEG range of 12,850–34,600. Pink salmon were in the lower end of their SEG range of 54,500–237,200. Aerial surveys of Desire Lake documented 8,860 sockeye salmon. This is within the SEG range of 8,800–15,200 fish for Desire Lake. The Delight Lake weir counted 8,616 sockeye salmon. This is also within the SEG range of 7,500–17,650 fish for this system.

Eastern District

The 2012 preseason commercial forecast for the Eastern District was 25,700 wild stock sockeye salmon. Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) forecasted a total return of 216,000 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities. Total harvest from this district was 83,603 sockeye salmon with all of these fish harvested by CIAA for cost recovery purposes. This compares to a previous 10-year average commercial harvest of 52,344 sockeye salmon for common property and cost recovery harvests combined. Escapement through the weir at Bear Creek (12,456) was sufficient to meet the “desired inriver return” of 5,620–13,220

sockeye salmon. This goal is the combination of the SEG (700–8,300) as well as the estimated 4,920 sockeye salmon required for broodstock for the CIAA sockeye salmon program at Trail Lakes Hatchery. In addition, 2,400 sockeye salmon were documented during aerial surveys of Aialik Lake escapement. This is below the SEG range of 3,700–8,000 fish for this system.

Kamishak Bay District

The 2012 preseason commercial forecast for the Kamishak Bay District was 98,300 sockeye and zero pink salmon. CIAA forecasted a return of 10,200 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. Total harvest from this district was 55,255 sockeye, 61 pink and 2,425 chum salmon. In addition, 1,260 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake Special Harvest Area (SHA) for cost recovery purposes. This compares to a previous 10-year average of 64,961 sockeye, 70,776 pink and 56,663 chum salmon. Preliminary escapement survey indices for both chum and pink salmon show escapement levels in the lower end of their respective SEG ranges of 65,550–141,600 for chum, and 25,950–203,400 for pink salmon. Video enumeration of sockeye salmon returning to Chenik Lake documented escapement in the upper end of the SEG range of 3,500–14,000 fish. Video documentation of returns to Mikfik Lake for this species showed that escapement to the lake was below the SEG range of 6,300–12,150 fish.

Table 1. Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2012.

District	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	11	39	6,366	19	155,538 ^a	225	162,187
Outer District	15	8	78	98	59,567	50,906	110,657
Eastern District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kamishak Bay District	6	0	55,255	0	61	2,425	57,741
Common property purse seine total	16	47	61,699	117	215,166	53,556	330,585
Southern District	15	86	10,260	33	10,305	927	21,611
Common property set gillnet total	15	86	10,260	33	10,305	927	21,611
Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery							
cost recovery- Tutka Lagoon SHA			15,619		171		15,790
cost recovery- China Poot SHA			11,938	7	586	1	12,532
broodstock- Tutka Lagoon SHA			18,754		8,140		26,894
broodstock- Port Graham SHA			503		21,152 ^a		503
Trail Lakes Hatchery							
cost recovery- Resurrection Bay SHA			83,609		15	329	83,953
cost recovery- Kirschner Lake SHA			1,260				1,260
broodstock- Bear Lake SHA			4,428				4,428
Hatchery total		0	136,111	7	8,912	330	145,360
LCI Total Harvest		133	208,070	157	234,383	54,813	497,556

^a21,152 pink salmon were harvested in the common property fishery in the Port Graham Subdistrict and sold live to CIAA for use as broodstock. These fish were reported as CPF harvests and are included in the CPF total harvest. These fish are NOT included in the hatchery total harvest.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be on Wednesday, May 1, 2013.

Announcement recordings are available on the 24-hour telephone recording in the Homer office at 907/235-7307. Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon>

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time.